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TAGS: PREL MARR MOPS MD

SUBJECT: NO CURRENT PARLIAMENTARY DECISION ON IRAQ TROOPS; MOLDOVA
CANNOT ANSWER RE 2009

REF: A) STATE 4865

Classified By: Ambassador Michael D. Kirby for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Pol/Econ Chief and DATT met February 29 with Iurie Stoicov, head of Moldova's Parliamentary Committee on Security Issues, to discuss Moldova's troop contributions to Iraq and inquire about planning for 2009. As requested by Ref A, we raised the question of Moldova's possibilities for participating in a peacekeeping force that is not mandated by the U.N. Security Council.

¶2. (C) Stoicov reported that although he had expected the Parliament to decide this week on sending Moldova's sixth contingent to Iraq, the issue had not gone forward for consideration. Following Kosovo's declaration of independence, the Parliament had adopted a very rare unanimous decision (opposing the declaration), and the current mood did not favor passage of the Iraq troops decision. Stoicov had determined that it would be better to wait and raise the issue later, rather than to have the deployment rejected, given the current mood in the parliament.

¶3. (C) Stoicov was not in a position to make any concrete predictions about what would happen in 2009 after the expiration of the U.N. Security Council mandate. He noted that Moldovan law limits participation in international peacekeeping operations to those under either a U.N. or OSCE mandate.

¶4. (C) Comment: Though many parliamentarians support Iraq participation, the decision faces some stiff opposition each time. Given Moldova's cumbersome decision-making process, and the fact that there is already a three-month gap since the departure of the fifth contingent, it is impossible to determine what will happen in 2009. As parliamentary approval cannot be taken for granted even within the current U.N. mandate, it will be much harder for Moldova in 2009, when the required legal precondition for participation will not be in place.

KIRBY